GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5060
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2016
Free Distribution of Life Saving and Generic Medicines
Sawant Shri Arvind Ganpat;Verma Smt. Rekha Arun

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to distribute life saving drugs and generic medicines free of cost to enhance healthcare services;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the financial and operational provision for the same;

(c) whether the Government proposes to provide all drugs/drug formulations included in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) under the said scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures being taken by the Government to ensure quality, safety norms and standards of the medicines?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)
(a) & (b): Public Health being a state subject, it is for the States/UTs to draw up such action plans as per their need. Under the National Health Mission (NHM), financial and technical support is provided to the States/UTs for strengthening their healthcare delivery system including support for provision of essential drugs free of cost to those who access public health facilities. An incentive of upto 5% additional funding (over and above the normal allocation of the state) under the NHM is provided to those states that effectively implement free essential medicines initiative. All the States/UTs have reported that they have notified free drug policy in their respective States/UTs.

(c) & (d): The National Free Drugs Service Initiative under the National Health Mission does not specify the number of essential drugs to be provided free of cost. Public health being a State subject, the number of essential drugs to be provided free of cost is decided by the States and varies from State to State. However, the Ministry has provided illustrative list of essential medicines that should be provided at Sub Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and District Hospitals.

(e): The steps taken by the Government to check Spurious/Sub-Standard Drugs in the country include:
â€¢ Amending the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 by the Drugs & Cosmetics (Amendment) Act, 2008 to provide for more stringent penalties for manufacture and trade of spurious and adulterated drugs.

â€¢ Making provisions in the Drugs & Cosmetics (Amendment) Act, 2008 for setting up of Special designated courts for speedy disposal of cases to deal with the cases of offences under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

â€¢ Issuance of guidelines for taking action on samples of drugs declared spurious or not of standard quality in the light of enhanced penalties under the Drugs & Cosmetics (Amendment) Act, 2008 on the Website of CDSCO for purpose of uniform implementation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act in the Country.

â€¢ Initiation of Whistle Blower Scheme to encourage vigilant Public Participation in the direction of Movement of spurious drugs in the country.

â€¢ Providing assistance for upgrading of testing facilities and establishing new drug testing laboratories under the Capacity Building project through Wold Bank, so as to enhance the capacity of the laboratories to test large number of samples.

â€¢ Overseas inspection of drug manufacturing sites to ensure quality of imported bulk drugs.

â€¢ Amendment of Schedule m to the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, pertaining to Good Manufacturing Practices in 2001 to make it at par with the international standards. It is mandatory for the manufacturers of drugs to comply with requirements of this schedule for quality control of the drugs manufactured by them.

â€¢ Introduction of Good laboratory Practices.

â€¢ State have been advised to incorporate adequate quality assurance safeguards while procuring drugs.